W. 2--4

N° 5

4

Handycrafts man

LONG AND SHORT LEETS

DEMONSTRATED TO BE THE

ESSENCE AND QUINTESSENCE

OF

POLITICAL FREEDOM.

In a LETTER, from a HANDY-CRAFTSMAN of this City, to the READER.

——————To ſee our Senators
Cheat the deluded people with a ſhew
Of liberty, which yet they ne'er muſt taſte of.—
All that bear this are villains, and I one,
Not to rouſe up at that great call of nature,
And check the growth of theſe domeſtic ſpoilers,
That make us ſlaves, and tell us, 'Tis OUR CHARTER.

Venice Preſerved.

[Price One Penny.]

BRITISH MUSEUM

A LETTER, &c.

SIR,

"A LAWYER is an honeſt employment, ſo "is mine."——This is one of the few aſſertions in the Beggar's opera to which I cannot altogether aſſent. In regard to my own profeſſion, I would fain hold it to be true.—As honeſt as ſteel, is an old proverb; and I am a cutler by trade. Honeſty however, I ſuſpect much, is not the metal which a lawyer always deals in: There is hardly any thing ſo inconſiſtent with common ſenſe, or common honeſty, which a fee will not induce Gentlemen of the Long Robe to maintain. I have been told, that they can argue that the moon is made of green cheeſe; that two and three do not make five; and, would you credit it, only a few weeks ago, I heard one of them contend before a learned judge, with as ſerious a countenance, as if he himſelf had believed what he ſaid to be true, (when God knows, he was all the while laughing in his own

own ſleeve), That the Trades of Edinburgh enjoyed *abſolute freedom in the election of their deacons*; in no reſpect infringed by the humiliating homage yearly paid to the Town Council, when fourteen reſpectable incorporations bowing before them, with contrite hearts and broken ſpirits, preſent their fourteen long leets.——It is ſaid that the oſtrich can ſwallow and digeſt iron; I am not naturaliſt enough to know if this be true; and my experience of the obdurateneſs of that metal makes me queſtion the fact. If it is, I am ſure he muſt have the throat and ſtomach of an oſtrich, that can ſwallow and digeſt the propoſition which the lawyer maintained.—Argumentation, Sir, does not belong to my profeſſion; in that I am as little verſant as gentlemen of the long robe are in the tempering and poliſhing of ſteel. It cannot be expected, therefore, that I ſhould combat the lawyer here referred to, with his own weapons.——But if he will be kind enough to conſider the caſes, and anſwer the queries annexed, out of one hundred different articles, which my ware-houſe contains, he ſhall have, *gratis*, his free choice, or *abſolute freedom in election*, according to his own ſenſe of the phraſe:—That is to ſay, Out of the hundred

dred he ſhall leet ſix, from which I will ſtrike out three, the moſt ſalerife and valuable, and then he ſhall have the *abſolute election* of one out of the three remaining outcaſts; the preciſe ſtate at preſent of the fourteen incorporations of Edinburgh, in regard to their deacons.

CASE FIRST.

A CERTAIN Baronet is invited by the T. C——l to a ſplendid entertainment at Fortune's. "You ſhall have the *abſolute freedom* "*of election* in regard to your diſhes, (ſay his "entertainers), there is Fortune's bill."—— "Let me then have *ſour crout*, *turtle*, and *ve-* "*niſon*, &c. &c. (anſwered the Baronet,) the "firſt, in particular, is a German diſh of "which I am avaritiouſly fond."—— "No, "no, replies the T. C——l, that cannot be "conſiſtently with our definition of *abſolute* "*freedom in election*, which we daily impoſe "upon the incorporations as a political creed; "but of the hundred diſhes contained in For- "tune's bill, you may ſelect ſix, and after "we have put an abſolute and arbitrary ne- "gative upon the three beſt of them, you "may pitch upon any one of the poſtponed

"three

" three that is moſt pleaſant to your palate."
——" What, in the name of wonder, (ex-
" claims the amazed and enraged Baronet),
" call you this *abſolute freedom in election*, to
" be reſtricted to ſix out of one hundred, and
" then to have this reſtricted number redu-
" ced to one out of three: But ſince better
" cannot be, there is my leet of ſix; God be
" praiſed, I ſeldom meet with ſo ſtinted a
" meal." ——" And there, (reſumed the T.
" C——l,) is our ſhort leet of three: For
" what you are to receive, the Lord make
" you thankful."——" Nothing will make me
" thankful for ſuch ſmall mercies, (vocife-
" rates the Baronet,) *ſour crout*, *turtle*, and
" *veniſon*, my ſoul's delight, are out-leeted, and
" nothing leeted but beef, mutton, and hard
" fiſh, which my tuſks are too unſtable to
" chew, and my ſtomach too capricious to
" digeſt."——Pray, Mr. Lawyer, ARE NOT LONG AND SHORT LEETS THE ESSENCE AND QUINTESSENCE OF POLITICAL FREEDOM?

CASE

CASE SECOND.

"YOU no doubt dined hard yeſterday, "for I heard you were feaſting with the "T. C—l in Fortune's," (ſaid a certain Apothecary to a certain Baronet as he cringed at his morning levee); "permit me, there- "fore, to preſcribe a doze of cooling phyſic." ---"I dinned damnation ill, (anſwered the "baronet) a plague upon their leets, and "political creed. However, Mr. Apothe- "cary, as you are my good friend, I care "not though I take a doze to ſerve you; "which may prove a leading card to my fat "friends who preſide in the T. C----l; but "then I muſt have *abſolute freedom in the e- "lection* of my medicine."---"By all means, "(replied the apothecary), there is the Edin- "burgh diſpenſatory; chuſe for the deacon "of your corpulent body corporate, which "ever ſpecific you will. Yet ſoftly a little, "the word deacon recals to my remember- "ance our political definition of *abſolute free- "dom in election*, conſiſtently with which, "out of the ſix hundred medicines, contain- "ed in the Edinburgh diſpenſatory, your

"firſt

" firſt *free and unlimited choice* muſt be re-
" ſtricted to ſix, and your ſecond to three.
" There, Sir Baronet, is the ſhort leet."---
" Never, (exclaims the bluſtering baronet),
" was there ſuch a mockery of common
" ſenſe, and ſuch an abuſe of the terms *ab-*
" *ſolute freedom in election.*---Why, Mr. Apo-
" thecary, of the ſix hundred articles con-
" tained in the Edinburgh diſpenſatory, you
" have left me nothing to determine upon
" but ſalts, ſenna, and manna, all and each
" of which I abominate.---Rhubarb, Sir,
" which was in my long leet; it is an abler
" ſtomachic, and more to my mind.---" For
" that very reaſon, (reſumed the apothecary)
" it was outleeted; your good friends of the
" T. C----l uniformly outleet the ableſt and
" moſt popular candidates appearing in the
" long leets."---Pray, Mr. Lawyer, *Are not long and ſhort leets the eſſence and quinteſſence of political freedom?*

CASE THIRD.

" YOUR honour feaſted at Fortune's yeſ-
" terday, you have been phyſicked to-day"
(ſaid Tom the pewterer dreſſed out in his Sunday's apparel, and making his beſt bow),
" my

" my ſhop abounds in pewter utenſils ſuit-
" ed *ad hunc effectum* as the learned apo-
" thecary ſays, a phraſe which I can con-
" jecture the meaning of, though I am not
" book learned.---" You may have *abſolute*
" *freedom of election* in regard to all my uten-
" ſils, and to ſuch cuſtomers as your honour,
" I never name a price."---" I am much ob-
" liged to you, honeſt Tom, (anſwered the
" baronet) a friend in need is a friend in-
" deed.--But I hope you wont uſe me after
" the manner of my fat friends in the T.
" C---l, and the Apothecary, who, under the
" aſſurance of *abſolute freedom in election*, in-
" vited me to a feaſt where I was famiſhed,
" and induced me to ſwallow phyſic which
" griped my guts."---" Alas, Sir, (replied
" Tom the Pewterer,) in conformity with our
" definition of political freedom, and the
" preſent political creed in which we would
" fain perſuade the fourteen incorporations
" to acquieſce, you muſt ſelect only ſix out
" of my numerous pewter utenſils, which
" my oath as a good citizen, and worthy
" member of the T. C---l, obliges me to re-
" duce to number three, out of which you
" muſt accommodate your POSTERIORS as
" you beſt can.---All the favour I can ſhow

" you .

" you is, to make the ſelect three as capa-
" cious as poſſible, for your honour's bottom
" is above the common ſize."---" This may
" be your *ſet of the city*, your *political creed*,
" your *eſſence and quinteſſence of political free-*
" *dom*, your *abſolute freedom in election*, or
" what you will; but ſure I am, it is per-
" fectly inconſiſtent with the common ac-
" ceptation of language, and with common
" ſenſe; for will any perſon alive perſuade
" me that I was a free agent, and enjoyed
" abſolute freedom in the election of my
" dinner, my cooling phyſic, and my pewter
" utenſil, when I was famiſhed at the firſt,
" gripped with the ſecond, and upon occa-
" ſion of the laſt, have my big buttocks
" ſqueezed, pinched and pommeled into the
" orifice of a jordan, not large enough for
" the backſide of a child."---Pray, Mr. Law-
" yer, *Are not long and ſhort leets the eſſence*
" *and quinteſſence of political freedom?*

When theſe caſes, three in number, in honour of the ſhort leets are attentively peruſed, and the queries ariſing from them anſwered by the learned lawyer, he and the reader may perhaps be favoured with ſome more, by their moſt humble ſervant,

A HANDY-CRAFTSMAN.

BRITISH MUSEUM 6 DE 83